

**Millstone Township
Agricultural Advisory Council
November 5, 2007
Meeting Minutes**

Call to Order: The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM

Roll Call:

Present - A. Romano, P. Butch, S. Pinhas

Absent - C. Halka, G. Wilson

Guests – N. Grbelja, G. Asprocolas, J. Pinhas

The Secretary read the adequate notice.

Approval of September 10, 2007, minutes was tabled until the December meeting.

Motion made by Ms. Pinhas to approve October 1, 2007, minutes with a Second offered by Ms. Butch and all in favor. Vote: Yes = 3 and No = 0

Old Business

- **Open Farm Market** – a local farmer, George Asprocolas, was in attendance to provide information to the Council regarding various aspects of establishing an open farm market in Millstone. Issues discussed include the following:
 - **Participation:** The Council agreed that the market should be limited to local farmers with a targeted customer base of Millstone residents. The market should start with a limited number of farmers to prevent internal competition. Ms. Pinhas will survey local farmers to acquire information regarding crop production and interest in open farm market participation and report findings at the next Ag Council meeting. Mr. Asprocolas informed the Council that the open market doesn't need to be limited to produce and may include vendors selling items such as baked goods, pickles, cheeses, breads and crafts.
 - **Location:** The location would need to be on a main road, with good visibility from the street and adequate and accessible parking. To ensure success, the market should be purposefully established and not attached to other events (e.g. sports). The location should not be established in an area where it would compete with other local established markets. Potential locations discussed include the area across from Wagner Farm Park, the Clarksburg Inn and the area on Route 537 by McDonald's. Another potential location is the lower parking lot of the Elementary School. Ms. Grbelja will contact the School regarding availability of the parking lot.
 - **Market Hours:** Suggested times include weekdays from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM and/or weekends from 8:00 AM to 2:00 or 3:00 PM
 - **Period of Operation:** Mr. Asprocolas informed the Council that crops are available in June but limited in variety and that the end of July is a good time to establish an open market because there is substantial variety availability; he also informed the Council that they should move ahead as soon as possible because markets get booked quickly and local farmers may not be available.
 - **Rules and Regulations:** The Monmouth County Health Department must be contacted to determine regulations regarding cutting of fruits and vegetables for sampling; the county weights and measures department will

need to inspect if scales will be utilized. Ms. Grbelja will contact Mr. John Lester of the County Health Department regarding regulations.

- **Advertisement:** Ms. Pinhas suggested advertising as local farmers providing a service to residents; Ms. Butch suggested using the market as an educational opportunity for children; the Secretary will contact the NJ Department of Agriculture to obtain educational material for school age children; utilizing services of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) was also suggested.
- **Correspondence/MCPS response regarding farm lease program** – The Council is dissatisfied with response from the MCPS. Chairman Romano will prepare a follow-up letter and will email the letter to the Secretary for mailing to the MCPS. The Council needs to understand why a Millstone farmer was not notified of the bid process when he specifically requested to be notified. The MCPS also sent “Specifications for the Leasing of Monmouth County Park System Farmland” for the Council to review.
- **Correspondence/SADC response to Mattei subdivision** – The subdivision was denied. Ms. Butch stated that there has been confusion in the past because the SADC did not do a good job of informing people about subdividing preserved land; however the SADC is currently doing a better job with explaining rules to property owners. Ms. Butch informed the Council that the SADC does not have any farmers on their board.
- **Animal OEM Plan** – Chairman Romano completed reviewing the Red Book. He informed the Council that large animal rescue was not included in the book. There was a general discussion regarding possible causes of an emergency situation and in the case of a State of Emergency declaration, residents would not be permitted to travel on the roads, making it difficult to obtain water and care for large animals. Ms. Grbelja informed the Council that local governments are responsible for documenting their own evacuation plan. Discussion included compiling a list of veterinarians who could be contacted in an emergency situation and having a large enough water supply on hand for animals.
- **Farmland assessment seminar** – The seminar went well and was conducted by a knowledgeable speaker. The Q & A session was informative. The tape of the seminar will be broadcast on the PEG channel beginning on Wednesday, November 7, and will be aired 3 times during the day. The “New Jersey’s Farmland Assessment Act” will be posted to the Township website. The next seminar, Right to Farm, will be on held Thursday, November 8.
- **Recommendation of plan** – There will be a meeting at Ms. Butch’s house on Monday, November 12, to finish the plan. Finalizing or amending the plan will be discussed at the December 3 Council meeting. Copies of the finalized plan must be provided to all members of the Township Committee, the OSFP and Ag Advisory Councils. If the plan is not provided to the State by the December 15 deadline, Millstone will lose funding.
- **Clambake** – Ms. Butch announced that Mr. Cory Wingerter agreed to chair a Clambake for 2008. The fundraiser will be held in early June.

New Business

- **Appointment of New Secretary** – Ms. Butch made a motion to approve the appointment of Ms. Lori Maher as the new Council Secretary; Ms. Pinhas offered a second and by unanimous vote, the new Secretary was appointed and welcomed to the Council.
- **Appointments & Re-appointments** – Current Council members' terms were reviewed and a replacement for Gary Wilson was discussed. Talent forms will be distributed at the November 8th seminar. There are 2 changes to the Ag Council appointments
 - The 5 member Ag Council is to be comprised of 3 farmers that own interest and farm the land and 2 additional members.
 - If a family member of one of the Council members submits an application, the Council member must step down due to a conflict of interest. A family member is defined as someone who lives in the same household. The Council member can be re-appointed after the completion of the application process.
- **Draft 2008 Meeting Schedule** – Ms. Butch made a motion to approve the calendar with a second offered by Ms. Pinhas and all in favor of approval. The 2008 calendar can be advertised.
- **New Farmland Plan criteria** – Ms. Butch suggested that Millstone accept the state criteria so as not to encumber residents with additional stipulations. Motion was made by Ms. Pinhas to accept any farm that meets the minimum state criteria with a second offered by Mr. Romano and all in favor.
- **Review Potential Targeted Areas** – Ms. Butch provided a handout containing descriptions of the Millstone project areas, preserved properties and potential preservation properties. There are 4 project areas named Perrineville East, Perrineville West, Clarksburg East and Clarksburg West. A map showing the density of farmland to total land within the 4 project areas will be produced to identify the direction of the preservation program.
- **Farm Agency News Release** – “USDA Designates Counties in NJ as Natural Disaster Areas” dated 11/1/07 was distributed for review and has been posted to the Ag Council website.

At 9:15 PM a Motion was made by Ms. Pinhas to move to Executive Session with a Second offered by Ms. Butch and by unanimous vote the Council moved to Executive Session.

At 9:39 PM the Council returned to regular session and having no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Pinhas and with a second offered by Mr. Romano and by unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at 9:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine Maher